

CHALLENGE



THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

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STRIKE!



It's a hot fightback summer! From hotel workers, grad-student workers, writers, actors, workers are shutting it down!. Earlier this year, college teachers, healthcare workers, education workers, graduate students—all have walked off the job with overwhelming public support. As we go to press 40,000 rail workers from the United Kingdom are on the picket lines leading the largest rail strike in 30 years. We may see strikes by 350,000 UPS workers in August and by auto workers this fall. Clearly, capitalism's crisis appears to have triggered a period of sharper class struggle.

Workers are fed up with the inequalities—the rising cost of living, exacerbated by the capitalist-bred pandemic's economic effects, stagnating wages, and more—which disproportionately hit Black and brown working families the hardest.

If you live or work in an area where workers are on strike, support the picket line! Greet workers with the revolutionary ideas of CHALLENGE and the chant, “hey hey ho ho! this capitalist system has got to go!”

Workers deserve nothing less than a communist world. That's a world run by and for our class.

JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL FIGHT FOR COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

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OUR FIGHT

✧Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to destroy capitalism and the dictatorship of the capitalist class. We organize workers, soldiers and youth into a revolutionary movement for communism.

✧The dictatorship of the working class — communism—can provide a lasting solution to the disaster that is today’s world for billions of people. This cannot be done through electoral politics, but requires a revolutionary movement and a mass Red Army led by PLP.

✧Worldwide capitalism, in its relentless drive for profit, inevitably leads to war, fascism, poverty, disease, starvation and environmental destruction. The capitalist class, through its state power — governments, armies, police, schools and culture — maintains a dictatorship over the world’s workers. The capitalist dictatorship supports, and is supported by, the anti-working-class ideologies of racism, sexism, nationalism, individualism and religion.

✧While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim “communism is dead,” capitalism is the real failure for billions worldwide. Capitalism returned to Russia and China because socialism retained many aspects of the profit system, like wages and privileges. Russia and China did not establish communism.

✧Communism means working collectively to build a worker-run society. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. While capitalism needs unemployment, communism needs everyone to contribute and share in society’s benefits and burdens.

✧Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of “race.” Capitalism uses racism to super-exploit Black, Latin, Asian and indigenous workers, and to divide the entire working class.

✧Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women— sexism—and divisive gender roles created by the class society.

✧Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.

✧Communism means that the minds of millions of workers must become free from religion’s false promises, unscientific thinking and poisonous ideology. Communism will triumph when the masses of workers can use the science of dialectical materialism to understand, analyze and change the world to meet their needs and aspirations.

✧Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers. Join Us!

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WHO WRITES FOR CHALLENGE?

CHALLENGE is for the working class, produced by the working class. The fact that CHALLENGE/PLP articles are not signed grows from PLP’s criticism of the cult of the individual in the former socialist Soviet Union and China. We do not want to encourage the possibility of building up a “following” around any particular individual.

While an article may be written by one person, the final version is based on collective discussion and criticism. Many times this collective discussion even precedes an individual’s writing of an article.

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Editorial

Spain

Fight bosses’ rising fascism

If the far-right Vox party joins Spain’s ruling coalition after the July 23 general election, it will be the first Spanish government to include open fascists since the death of mass murderer Francisco Franco in 1975. It would also mark the latest failure of liberal democracy to manage the growing global crisis of capitalism. As the U.S. bosses keep weakening in the face of an aggressive challenge by the Chinese imperialists, their junior NATO partners—the centrist parties that have ruled Western Europe since World War II—are losing their grip as well.

Instability is everywhere; everything seems up for grabs. With the war in Ukraine escalating and World War III looming, the old liberal democratic world order is in shambles. Confronted with runaway inflation, a wave of climate catastrophes, and mass unemployment (close to 13 percent in Spain), both the open fascist insurgents and the old guard liberals are scapegoating migrating workers—a hallmark of rising fascism. As millions of workers’ lives are upended in the general turmoil, a segment of the working class has been infected by the disease of anti-immigrant racism. In this dark night of weak class consciousness, the capitalist rulers are pulling out all the stops to mislead, deceive, and divide us. Regardless of which of the bosses’ factions wins the next round of elections, the rulers will ultimately need full-blown fascism to have any chance to destroy their competition and protect their profits.

Only an international mass workers’ movement, led by communists, can beat back the rising tide of fascism. Only communist revolution, spearheaded by the fighting Progressive Labor Party, can end imperialist war and create a society run by and for the working class. The profit system can’t reform its way out of this crisis. History shows us that it can never serve workers’ needs. Capitalism must be destroyed, root and branch. Join us—we have a world to win!

As liberal democracy weakens, open fascists rise

Six years ago in Spain, nostalgic for the Franco years (foreignpolicy.com, 6/29), a splinter group denounced the right-wing Popular Party as too soft and set off on its own. Widely dismissed and underestimated, the Vox party exploited workers’ anxiety over the Catalan separatist movement, which was pushing to break away from the richest region of Spain (centered in Barcelona) and form its own country. Using the classic fascist tools of gutter racism and sexism, and taking a nationalist page from the U.S. Small Fascist forces fronted by Donald Trump (“Make Spain Great Again!”) Vox “opposes abortion rights, denies climate change and rejects the need for the government to combat gender violence” (New Indian Express, 7/18).

Now backed by 15 percent of voters nationwide, Vox is being courted to form a new parliamentary majority by the Popular Party, which is favored to win the upcoming election after shifting to a more openly racist, anti-immigrant platform (El Pais, 7/24/2018). If that alliance comes to pass, Spain would join a growing list of European countries—including the old World War II fascist axis of Germany, Italy, and Vichy France—with openly fascist parties either within the government or as a leading opposition to the government. And with Spain next in line to hold the presidency of the European Union, Spanish fascists could influence the EU’s agenda.

When liberal democracy fails the capitalist class, fascism gives the bosses more direct control over all aspects of society, from the media and universities to industrial policy and war preparations. It’s no accident that fascism is the fastest-growing political movement in Europe today. This reality would have been unthinkable in the decades following World War II, when fascist parties were outlawed in Germany and marginalized in France and Italy. But times are changing, and fast. Millions of workers have lost confidence in the ability of the traditional post-war European parties to solve the glaring problems of capitalism. Europe’s capitalist rulers—the dominant banks and industrialists—are terrified of losing the white working class, a fear compounded by Britain’s departure from the EU and recent mass protests against the French bosses’ pension reforms. At present, these rulers aren’t moving to smash Vox or the likes of open fascist leaders like Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni. If anything, they appear to be hedging



their bets—just as they did in Germany in 1933, when they sanctioned Adolph Hitler’s appointment as chancellor by the liberal-backed president.

In the most recent elections in Germany, the most committed fascist nation during World War II, the Alternative for Germany (AfD) expanded its base, even after AfD members were arrested for helping to plan a fascist coup last December. The party is polling up to 20 percent, “neck-and-neck with Chancellor Olaf Scholz’s Social Democrats and behind only the conservative CDU/CSU bloc” (france24.com, 3/7). In France, the National Rally headed by Marine Le Pen is now the highest-polling party in the country. Amid the ongoing rebellion over the French cops’ cold-blooded killing of a 17-year-old son of North African immigrants, it’s calling for harsher treatment of migrating workers, wholesale evictions of public housing residents for minor offenses, and the building of more prisons—the bosses’ modern concentration camps.

In their desperate attempt to hold on to power, the rulers’ mainstream liberal agents, from Joe Biden to Emmanuel Macron, are quickly adopting their own more virulent racist and anti-immigrant policies. From the Texas border to the segregated suburbs of Paris, they’re enabling mad-dog police terror. In France, the kkkops have even prohibited protests against their own racist violence! The result is a political spiral toward fascism. As the big capitalists move to the right, they’re legitimizing and energizing far-right parties that have little or no stake in liberal democracy. Vox, for example, is banning unfriendly news outlets from its events and calling for them to be shut down (Reporters Without Borders). As the bosses’ contradictions continue to sharpen, we can expect the liberals to follow suit in ditching the phony freedoms of capitalist democracy.

Only communists can defeat fascism

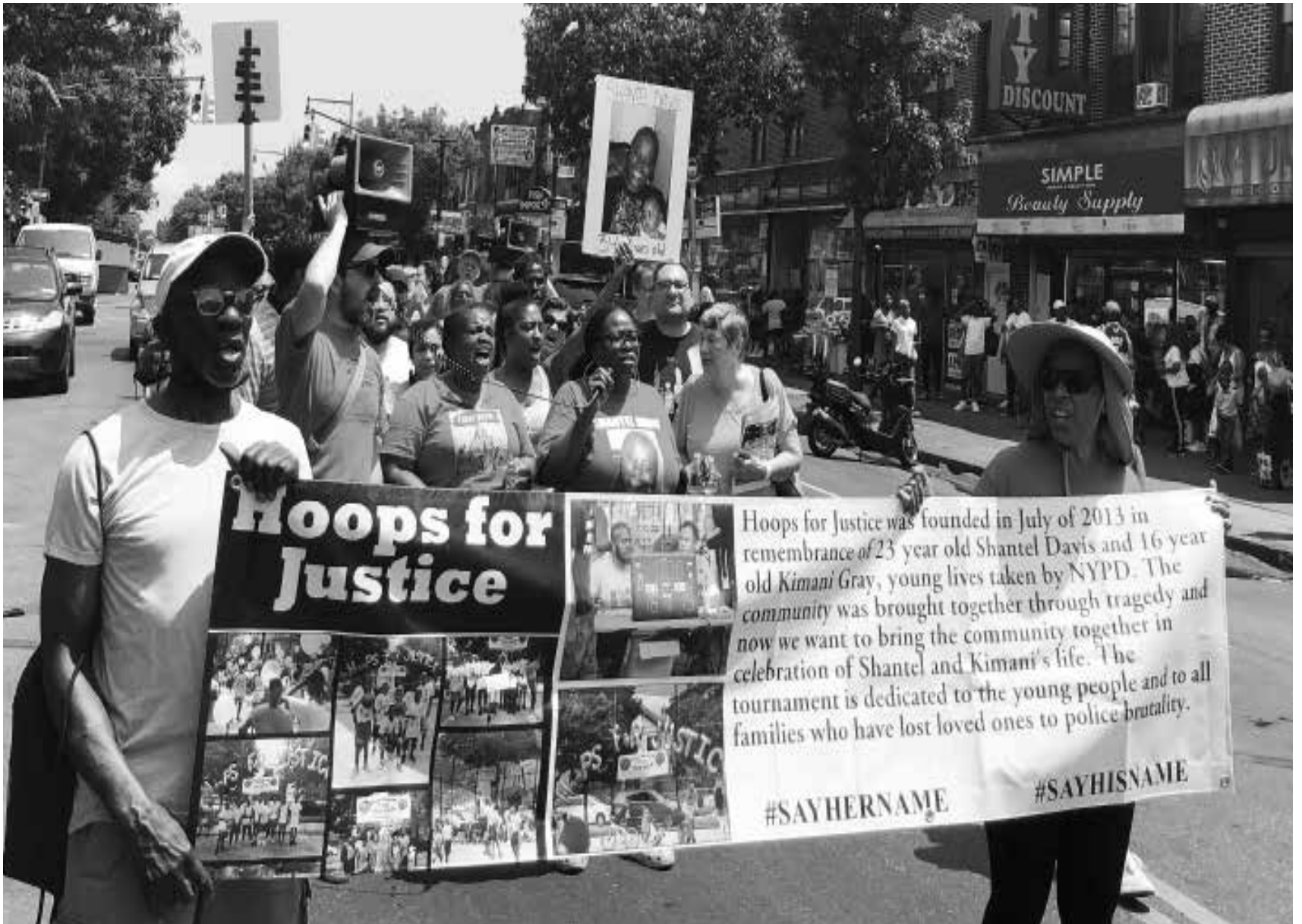
The working class cannot afford to sit around and wait for the capitalists to try to fix their unfixable contradictions. Economic and inter-imperialist crises inevitably lead to rising fascism and wider war. In World War II, the force that stopped full-blown fascism in its tracks was a communist-led working class. Although communists and other anti-fascists were defeated in the Spanish Civil War in the 1930s, they inspired workers throughout the world in the global conflict that followed, culminating in the Soviet Union’s destruction of Nazi Germany. The revolutionary Chinese Communist Party played an important role in beating back fascist Japan. The Communist Party of Italy led the resistance that smashed the fascist regime of Benito Mussolini.

Today there are but two paths before us: fascism or communist revolution. There is no middle ground, no third way. As communist theorist R. Palme Dutt observed in Fascism and Social Revolution (1934), “Capitalism in its decay breeds Fascism. Capitalist democracy in decay breeds Fascism. The only final guarantee against Fascism, the only final wiping out of the causes of Fascism, is the victory of the proletarian dictatorship.”

And so our choice is clear. Build Progressive Labor Party! 🇵🇸

Hot red summer

New fighters & thinkers for communist world



For shantel and too many other class sisters and brothers fight for communism!

New York City, July 12—Progressive Labor Party's (PLP) week-long summer project of rallies, discussion groups, CHALLENGE newspaper sales, social events and protests was proof that today's working-class youth are committed to building an international party for the masses of workers under rising fascism. Throughout the project, about 50 youth and workers distributed over 1,000 papers, rallied in working-class neighborhoods, and participated in our CHALLENGE workshops and sessions on fascism, sexism and more. This project increased our understanding and prepared our class to fight against the bosses' ideas and culture.

The project's peak was in Brooklyn on Saturday, July 10, with a petitioning campaign and rally to name a street in one community after Shantel Davis, a Brooklyn youth who was brutally murdered by the NYPD a decade ago. The project revealed that building and maintaining deep political roots, especially in Black and Latin working-class communities, what we call 'base building,' is indeed the critical factor that will make communist ideas mass ideas and prepare our class for running a world without capitalism.

Encouraging workers to participate

At our opening cookout of roughly 50 attendees, the icebreaker was successful in that people shared their reasons for attending and why they believed capitalism must be destroyed. Since getting people to speak on bullhorns has been a challenge in the past, we addressed this concern head on by asking everyone to draft their ideas on note cards that could also be used later for bullhorn speeches. This ended up being a successful strategy since we had the widest bullhorn participation ever in recent years.

One worker discussed the recent Supreme Court rulings against affirmative action in higher education and explained that our job as revolutionaries is to not only explain how the immediate threats of openly rac-

ist bosses like DeSantis and Trump attack our class but how the even more deadly but less blatant attacks of the Democratic Party are to blame for our continued suffering in terms of global issues like unemployment, migration crises, climate catastrophes and human trafficking. The struggle of Kingsborough Community College students and professors against police terror on campus was also given acknowledgement and put forward as a sharp example of how to fight inequality with multiracial unity and courage.

Distributing CHALLENGE

The public newspaper sales and rallies during the project are very important opportunities for our young comrades to sharpen their internal development in understanding the main political goals of Progressive Labor Party (see letters, page 6).

These sales also allow our members to learn from workers who witness and offer feedback. Over the course of the week, we distributed several hundred CHALLENGE papers on Broad and Market, a major thoroughfare in Newark, NJ, and over 600 papers in the Ivy Hill section of Newark as well. At these sales, members led speeches and chants such as "obrerros, unidos, jamas seran vencidos," (workers united will never be defeated) or "workers, united, will never be defeated," and in the process sharpened their analysis and public speaking skills.

As we would chant and read out headlines from our papers, workers would confirm our ideas such as a headline about smashing racism, kkkops and capitalism that motivated one worker to reply, "Yeah, it'll take a war to do that."

Workers were also very excited to see that our paper is in both English and Spanish. There was one very revealing exchange between a member of PLP and a worker who took the paper and asked, "What is capitalism?" There was a wonderful conversation that revealed that he already, in fact, knew the essence of

capitalist racist inequality and also about the inter-imperialist rivalry between Russian, Chinese and U.S. bosses that was shaping so much of the instability that all workers face today. Our class has so many of the tools already to run the world, and it is our job to remind each other of this fact and build the courage needed to make it happen.

No such thing as 'good' bosses!

Finally, our political education sessions and climactic event for Shantel Davis revealed the power of ideas and our appeal to the working class. In our session about racism, the recent Supreme Court decision was discussed again as a devastating, obvious attack against the working class. While we have targeted the Democratic Party as the leading force attempting to sway Black and Latin workers away from revolution, workers around the world also cheered on Obama.

And we now face the worst climate-driven migration crisis in human history! So while many people want to blame Trump for fascism, he isn't the problem any more than the rest of the bosses' politrickians.

The bosses will have you believe by prosecuting Trump and those who participated in the Jan 6 insurrection that the system works. But for one small victory, the working class is subjected to mass deportation, incarceration, and other horrors every single day under capitalism. The true victory is not punishing a cop with jail time, but removing the racist conditions which breed racist police in the first place, and no reform, judge or politician can promise us that.

Workers in Brooklyn who spontaneously joined our Shantel Davis rally also know that, and this shows us that their decision to join us was not really spontaneous at all. Rather, it shows us that our class watches us, and every fight we take, every summer project we complete, is confirmation to our class that our Party is serious, committed, and ready for the fight. Join us! 🇵🇸

Striking hotel workers deserve communism



Los Angeles, July 4—The sound of beating drums traveled for blocks through downtown Los Angeles. Mirrored music could be heard near the international airport and in Santa Monica as well. Hotel workers from the Unite Here union Local 11 wanted to make sure their work stoppage over the July 4th weekend was felt by the hotel bosses in LA. As they took action to fight for a living wage, members of Progressive Labor Party joined them on the picket lines to remind them that the workers of the world produce and run everything and deserve nothing less than the whole pie. This we know will only happen with a communist revolution.

For three straight days, workers picketed in front of over a dozen hotels from 3 AM through 11 PM. The action culminated in a large protest where hundreds of workers, 90 percent of whom are Black and Latin women, marched to demand hotel profits be shared with them since the hotels can't function without them. Hotel bosses stand to make billions with the upcoming World Cup and Olympics being hosted in LA, but they want to maintain the current \$18.86 an hour minimum wage. One would have to work 17 hours a day to afford a two-bedroom apartment in LA with that salary. These poverty wages have left hundreds of women unable to be with their families, without healthcare, hungry, or worse. One woman can only

afford to live hours outside of LA, so every week, she leaves her family to sleep four nights in her car outside of the hotel that she cleans.

While workers demand a living wage, hotel bosses responded that it's not their responsibility to keep up with the cost of living in LA. We know these thieves want to keep every penny of profit for themselves. Workers have the power to unite and fight for the reform of higher wages, but the only way to end exploitation is to rid the planet of capitalism.

Liberal politicians and union misleaders only appear to care

The liberal bosses and union leadership in LA sound like they are on the side of the workers. Union leadership is pushing for a minimum wage of \$25 an hour. Council members Curren Price and Katy Yaroslavsky took it a step further by introducing a motion that would make the minimum wage for hospitality workers \$30 an hour by 2028. Even these wages are at poverty levels for LA though. But the larger danger comes from when workers believe these liberals and misleaders are our friends. Capitalism is never run in the interest of workers. These union misleaders and local politicians are nothing but representatives of local capital. Their appearance of care for our class is to keep us settling for reforms instead of finding true

change through revolution.

The biggest farce came when Los Angeles City Council members Hugo Soto-Martínez and Nithya Raman and Assemblywoman Wendy Carrillo were arrested at a rally on June 22, 2023 in support of hotel workers. This is nothing more than an attempt to launch their political careers, similar to how DiBlasio's New York City mayoral campaign took off after being arrested while "supporting" hospital workers. We can't be fooled by these opportunists. Two hundred workers were also arrested at that rally, but they and what they were fighting for was not the headline of any news story because workers are disposable in this rotten system.

Workers solidarity now - communism ASAP

Although it was hard to talk on the picket lines because of the successful drumming to which workers were exposed, members of the Party made some connections with workers. They were encouraged by our support as we marched side by side with them and chanted. While the union misleaders limited their chants to "sí se puede" ("yes we can") and "huelga" ("strike"), these workers are learning important lessons from the picket line about class consciousness, solidarity, and workers' power. One of the picket leader's comments revealed this understanding - "They are making all this money from the Olympics already and they don't want to share it with us. But we do the work. When the LA teachers went on strike, we joined them, and we have seen a lot of teachers come and support us too. We just have to keep fighting together." Workers in LA are learning valuable lessons on the picket lines that can't be learned anywhere else. Many had children joining them, so they are gaining this understanding as well. Our job as revolutionaries is to build on that understanding to reveal that workers can and will run society in a communist world.

The workers went back on the picket line on July 10th after a short break. Additionally the Screen Actors Guild union joined the Writer's Guild on strike this week. This uptick in class struggle in the LA area gives us lots of opportunity to raise ideas of class consciousness and turn them into schools for communism. We will definitely be back out there with them and struggle to bring our base along so they can learn these lessons as well. The fightback in LA continues!✊

MLG Conference: Fight for Communism!

Boston, June 16—Why, at this year's annual conference of the Marxist Literary Group (MLG), were more people than ever before talking about communism? It's a sign of the times, the deepening crisis of imperialism and racism and war. It's also the result of Progressive Labor Party (PLP) stepping up our fight for communism and the Party at the MLG. It's still the Marxist as opposed to the Communist Literary Group, but by taking the Marxist work of the conference seriously we are putting communism and the question of the party more on the agenda of these mostly younger academics and grad students.

With a lot of support, we proposed for next year's conference a reading group on revolutionary organization, so that the need for a communist party would be explicitly on the table. On the literature table this year for the first time was a stack of CHALLENGE, and our papers were all taken. Several people wanted to know more about our history, the article on the Cultural Revolution, etc. Not enough radical people know about PLP, and we are taking some simple steps to correct that at the MLG.

The conference focus this year was *Capital Vol. 1* and W.E.B. Du Bois's *Black Reconstruction*. To prepare, our comrades took part in three year-long study groups on Marx and Du Bois. Out of this we helped form a panel on *Capital* and one on Du Bois, and were often able to intervene from the Party's point of view in the general discussions of both books.

Many people, not only PLP, emphasized that Marx's book shows in great detail why capitalism can never be thoroughly reformed. The drive to expand capital accumulation through every corner of the world is inevitably reproducing insoluble problems: extremes of wealth and poverty; more masses of wage workers but at the same time masses of the unemployed; constant economic crisis each worse than the last; and capitalist competition leading to imperialist war. An anti-capitalist reader of Marx has to conclude as Marx did that capitalism can never be made to benefit the

working class. It's not usual to point out at the MLG that this conclusion from reading *Capital* entails a commitment to communist revolution. We made that point.

Racism and imperialism were not often discussed enough, although the Du Bois discussions did show how racism and capitalism are twinned both in the USA and in global imperialism. (Du Bois was an outstanding anti-imperialist voice his whole life long). *Capital* defines the global market as the heart of expanding capital accumulation, even in Marx's time; and his book is full of references to the war against American slavery and the parallels between chattel and wage labor. The transition to wage slavery and the missed opportunity of a united Black and white workers' struggle against capital is Du Bois's great theme—inspired by Marx—in *Black Reconstruction*. Other panels did explore capitalist racism: one on Richard Wright, several on the so-called "surplus" (chronically unemployed) population produced by capital, others on colonial land theft. We are friends with many of these presenters and got to know others this year.

If our proposal on revolutionary organization is adopted, we can put more focus on racism and imperialism next year by bringing more Lenin into MLG Marxism, and going beyond Lenin to advocate a single global revolutionary party which summarily banishes nationalism from workers' struggle. Examples from parties in India, South Africa and the Philippines could make the point that in our day revolutionary communism has to be organized in a single global party. Only such a party form, going further than the Comintern, can fight all the competing imperialist blocs on a global scale,

The new liberal anti-communism

Three comrades on a panel at the 2023 MLG conference called "The New Anti-Communism" showed how anti-communism remains alive and well in new forms, even in the absence of a mass communist movement. Why? Because communism remains the greatest threat to the ruling class, and both liberal and rightist wings of the capitalist parties in the USA and Canada are united in slandering it. In its identity-politics guise, anti-communism helps to recruit marginalized workers to fight in imperialist wars against "authoritarianism," to subdue white workers who might want to combat racism, and to provide political cover for racist attacks on the whole working class.

For one speaker, the Florida and Texas government attacks on "wokeness" as educational brainwashing (i.e., teaching about slavery, labor insurgency or gender politics) were dog-whistle accusations that recalled McCarthy-era portrayals of Communists infesting the brains of innocent Americans. Another speaker pointed out that it is wrong to point to "the right" as the main danger in such attacks on teachers and their unions, since liberal multicultural identity politics have prepared the ground for the likes of fascist Florida Governor Ron De Santis. Often, antiracist folks are disarmed against these attacks by their allegiance to divisive liberal identity politics which hide workers' common interests.

The third speaker discussed how the Canadian government has historically manipulated the status of "refugees." "Good" refugees have been those fleeing from communism, like those from Vietnam decades ago, or Ukrainians today fleeing a capitalist Russia falsely identified as communist through the word "authoritarian." But refugees from places like Haiti are to be turned away at the border. Propaganda like the short TV ads "Heritage Minutes" falsely feature Canada as a land of freedom from "totalitarian" oppression, while their multicultural imagery helps the liberal ruling class depict marginalized workers as full citizens of a free country. Liberals in Canada, fascists in Florida: both use anti-communism to shatter workers' unity, attack workers in struggle, and prepare a population of patriots for world war.

Continued bottom of page 5

Organizing in the Kentucky Mountain Laurel Festival for Revolution!

PINEVILLE, KENTUCKY, May 27—Progressive Labor Party (PLP) held a cadre school and sponsored a booth at the Kentucky Mountain Laurel Festival. We met a lot of people whose relatives were in bloody Harlan in the 1930s and told us some of their stories about armed battles between striking coal miners and mine owners and their goons.

We had a lot of good conversations. We engaged with about 70+ people. We gave out free water, tootsie rolls, flyers for the cadre school, and lots of CHALLENGE newspapers. We had a backpack full of PLP literature that we shared as well as a pamphlet we wrote about rebellions in Appalachia. We also learned not to get chocolate that melts.

There were far more good

**Build the
revolutionary
communist
movement
everywhere!**

people than bad at the Festival, but we faced some reactionaries on the first day. We left our table for 10 minutes to put things away and they spilled something sticky like Sprite on our table and wrote "f@#x you commies". Still, we were able to answer all questions of some of the people who had reactionary ideas. Of course, if someone is just a bully there's no good response!

They have this special po-

tato chip only in Appalachia called grippos like spicy barbecue chips, they were really good! We also had many comrades from Chicago come too and at the end of the cadre school we sent them home with plenty of grippos.

The outdoor cadre school went well, but rain kept the attendance a little lower than we expected. We had talks on the opioid crisis and the history of addiction under capitalism. A comrade from Kentucky talked about how Appalachia seems like a colony since much of their economy revolves around a single commodity like coal or timber, and most Appalachian capitalist enterprises and land are owned by people outside of Appalachia.

Build the revolutionary communist movement everywhere!✊

LETTER: Cadre school exposes capitalist propaganda machine

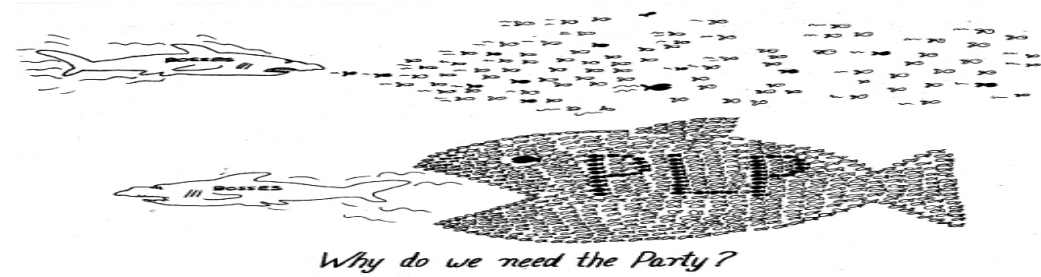
The Baltimore/DC area recently held a discussion-based and art-filled cadre school on capitalism in education and the role of consumerism in promoting capitalist ideology. Over 45 people came to discuss the problems inherent in capitalism and the path towards communism.

I have attended more than a dozen cadre schools in my experience with Progressive Labor Party (PLP) and this one was one of the most engaging ones. We did art projects related to advertising which generated more casual base building discussions with the other participants. In the education component

we made posters showing what we had discussed with a randomly selected partner; this helped me discuss ideas with my partner collaboratively. There was music playing during the breaks, and plenty of chances to meet other attendees and exchange ideas. The most exciting thing was the multiracial, comradely workers who attended. Everyone was encouraged to participate in the discussions and the atmosphere was comfortable enough that honest and sharp discussion flowed.

We also made a point that everyone had to wear masks since the event was indoors, and I'm glad we took Cov-

id-19 seriously because it turns out one attendee tested positive for Covid-19 the next day! Thankfully no other cases were reported, probably because we all wore masks. The cadre school was led by relatively new comrades and while of course there were a few bumps here or there, overall, everyone had a positive experience. We are definitely looking forward to continuing this type of discussion-oriented format in the future. We also learned that we need to continuously put forward organizing for the Party as the only way to fight capitalism and build a communist future.✊



**CAPITALISM
BREEDS SEXISM
RACISM
& IMPERIALISM!**



**FIGHT FOR A COMMUNIST
WORLD
BUILD THE INTERNATIONAL
PLP!
PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY**

MLG Conference: Fight for Communism!

Continued from page 4

in the process overcoming racism and nationalism in the workers' ranks. PLP has a lot to contribute in MLG discussions of the theory of the party form, coming out of our analysis in documents like Road to Revolution IV of the defeat of communism in the Soviet and Chinese parties.

There was, except for us, an eerie silence about the already begun inter-imperialist global war. Perhaps because people feel powerless? Another reason to join

the Party. The door is open for us to advocate that at the moment, though we are aware that we will face anti-communism here eventually. [See Box, "The New Liberal Anti-Communism"]

For our part, what we got out of the conference is best summarized by a young comrade: "This is our theory! Marxist theory belongs to us, to the communists, to the working class." There is a problem with the MLG: theory being divorced from practice. On the one hand, it's good that the powerful intellectual tradition of Marxism is alive and well among some academics; on the other hand, Marxism does not belong mainly

to academics. As Brecht wrote once, "Communism is simple: if you're a worker you can understand it." Communism is also complex, but workers trained in a revolutionary party led by workers—a party like PLP where academics too are welcome—can also master its complexity.

We are encouraged by this work among intellectuals, feeling our collective power to mobilize as a class if we can bring our academic co-workers into a worker-led PLP, building the Party to fight for communism as capitalism spins off into racist violence and war.✊

LETTERS

We encourage all CHALLENGE readers to send in letters and articles about their experiences fighting the bosses worldwide.



Fight these thieving landlords!

At the end of June Progressive Labor Party members who participate in community organizations met at a conference where they were discussing housing budgets in New York. As always, this event was taken advantage of by bureaucrats and opportunist politicians who try to put the class consciousness of the working class to sleep. The mayor appoints the Board of Directors for the Rental Guidelines Board for New York City that decides the rent increases for the 1.5 million apartments with rent stabilization in the City.

Under capitalism it doesn't surprise us that this kangaroo court decided against the interests of the working class and for the

benefit of the thieving landlords. Three percent increases for rental leases of one year and for two year leases, 2.75 percent for the first year and 3.5 percent for the second. Some friends in the community organization said it's ok because at least it's better than the original proposal from the landlords. No! It's a racist attack on working class families that have to choose between paying rent and paying for food and medical care. A rent increase between \$40 and 150 a month will push low income people over the edge. The fight must continue!

What can save us is united working class anger and the repudiation of this abusive imposition. It also makes us happy to have gotten a good reception from the crowd to our newspaper CHALLENGE. We distributed 100 copies at the event.

We have to remain united and fight to smash this capitalist system that oppresses us. To the extent that we continue our work inside our community organization, we will continue to intensify the contradiction between reform and revolution, winning more workers to the communist ideas of PLP.

★★★★★

'We're retired, not expired'

Retired NYC municipal workers have been fighting for over two years against a joint city/union plan to force them out of traditional medicare and into a private for profit so-called Medicare Advantage plan. Under capitalism, benefits that workers enjoy are always in danger of being taken

away. The plan to reduce retiree health coverage, paid for by the city for over sixty years, is an example of that fact. We need to build for a workers' state, communism, where bosses and their partners won't be able to take back what we have fought for. In that spirit, we must redouble our efforts to win our friends into PL study groups and into our party.

On July 7th a New York State Supreme Court judge issued a temporary restraining order (TRO) blocking the city of New York from forcing retirees out of city paid for traditional medicare and a medigap supplemental coverage and into a private for profit so-called Medicare Advantage plan. He said, in part, that retirees would likely suffer irreparable harm if forced into the new plan.

Retirees had packed the courtroom on July 6th and had previously demonstrated at City Hall, union headquarters as well as the city office of labor relations. We had been out in the rain, heat and freezing weather. We bombarded the mayor and city council with calls, letters and in person visits. We showed that we would fight back!

Although retirees were happy that the TRO was granted, many wondered what the city and union leaders of the municipal labor committee (MLC) would do next. Some thought the plan was dead. Others felt that a new plan would be devised. Although we are retired, we haven't expired and will continue to fight!

★★★★★

Letters from the summer project

Shantel Davis Day reaches workers in their homes

"We will never forget Shantel! We take the streets for Shantel!" chanted Progressive Labor Party members, friends, and family of Shantel Davis, who was brutally murdered by police in East Flatbush in 2012. Our chants were part of a militant march through the Brooklyn neighborhood that followed a rally and door-to-door organizing.

During the organizing portion I worked on a team with a college student who said this was her first time going door to door. We had a multiracial, multi-gendered group of all ages.

By visiting workers at their homes, we were able to have many qualitative [longer] conversations. One young worker we spoke to recalled being a child when Shantel was murdered, while others recalled the savagery of the racist police stealing a 23-year old woman from her family. Almost everyone we spoke to signed a petition to have a nearby street named after Shantel. They also eagerly took CHALLENGE and fliers for this year's Hoops For Justice Basketball Tournament on Saturday, August 5th which commemorates our sibling workers that have been stolen from us by the racist police and the capitalist system they serve. Attend the tournament, bring your friends and join PLP!

★

'Gives me great hope'

This year's summer project highlighted the importance of a long term outlook towards building communism and smashing the system. Our CHALLENGE editing workshop reinvigorated my appreciation for the paper as a tool of agitation, communication, and learning. A walking tour, led by one of our own, educated us on the militant history of working class fight back in Chinatown, as well as the dangers of liberal misleadership such as that of Mayor Eric Adams, councilwoman Margaret Chin, and the Museum of Chinese in America. As

NYCs air quality worsens and food prices go up, these liberal bosses continue attacking our class at home and abroad: cutting Food Stamps, gutting public education, pushing building projects such as luxury high rises that remain empty as homelessness increases, as well as a record tall skyscraper of a jail, and continuing to bomb our brothers and sisters in the Middle East, and arming the neo-nazi, reactionary forces in Ukraine. These wolves in sheep's clothing weaponize identity politics, winning workers with their words, while their actions continue to displace and destroy working class communities and lives for the sake of real estate developers and mega jails—in short, for the sake of profit and capital. Our practice of collectivizing all aspects of life, from leadership to childcare, were glimpses of the opposite; a world where all production serves the needs of workers—the communist future we fight for. Having brought two former students to this year's project gives me great hope in our mission. Long live communism!

★

'I saw the power of the working class'

The experience in this summer project was really enriching for me in the preparation for the communist struggle. Many important issues were addressed during the project, an example of this was the workshop on the steps to follow to write articles for the newspaper, and everything was clearly explained along with the necessary items to be able to write in a suitable way. Another aspect that helped in this school was the willingness of help from all the comrades to translate and clarify some of the concepts that were not clear to me. In addition to generating confidence to face in a bold way the mechanisms to show our struggle such as the delivery of the newspaper.

I met comrades from different places who told me their experiences of communist struggle. In addition to sharing this same struggle as it was in the marches that were

held, I hope to continue my knowledge in the party and continue fighting all these problems such as sexism, racism, and fascism. I will continue learning day by day during the arduous road to communism, as they say better red than expert.

★

Comrade from Colombia: 'enriching for me'

The summer project strengthened my commitment to the Party and to a communist cause. I saw committed comrades fighting for tenants rights in Newark, against gutter racism in Stillwater, NJ, and for the unity of Black, Latin and Asian workers against displacement in New York's Chinatown. It taught me that comrades are engaged in fightback all over and are making a difference in their own communities. In each case, I saw the power of the working class in organizing to defeat the bosses no matter where—our struggle has no borders. I felt a deep sense of revolutionary optimism seeing workers happily take CHALLENGE and cheer for the Party as we marched and rallied.

Above all, the summer project showed me glimpses of a communist future. It is a future in which the party leads workers in developing class consciousness through struggle. In doing so workers see that they themselves can protect each other, get better living conditions, feed each other, learn from one another and be militantly revolutionary.

★

'we are spreading fun and positivity'

The summer Project was very interesting because of the many things I had learned. For example, when we learned about fascism, and we learned about how sexism and racism is used by the bosses against the workers. I also learned a lot about why we need a Party. I think we need a Party because of how much fun and positivity we are spreading in the world.

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GLOSSARY: COMMUNIST TERMS

Fascism

Capitalism's response to a crisis of their system, when the bosses can no longer sustain the charade of liberal democracy and resort to more direct control and state terror instead. Fascism is marked by the ruling capitalists disciplining their own ranks to serve the urgent needs of the capitalist state and weather the crisis. To defend their system from internal and external threats, they use all the means available in their state apparatus, including violence. To build unity within their class and loyalty from workers, they rely on nationalist politics and calls for sacrifice. Their strategy is to mislead the working class to kill our working class sisters and brothers in the next inter-imperialist war.

Big Fascists

The Big Fascists are the dominant finance capitalist faction of the U.S. ruling class. They represent the wealthiest and most powerful bosses in the U.S., including multinational banks like Chase and Citibank, multinational oil companies like ExxonMobil, the big automakers, Boeing, Amazon, and the major media companies. As the dominant grouping since World War II, the Big Fascists were the architects of the liberal world order with the U.S. bosses on top. Their dominance rests on U.S. financial and military power and its strategic control of the Middle East and the flow of oil to Europe, Asia, and Africa. To sustain this dominance, they need to rebuild a huge, multiracial military for inter-imperialist war, most likely with China.

Small Fascists

The Small Fascists are a group of domestically oriented U.S. capitalists who are challenging the Big Fascists over the direction of U.S. imperialism. Since their interests are less tied to controlling the flow of oil, they are against heavy taxation to keep troops in the Middle East and in general oppose costly military bases and invasions. They're willing to rely on a smaller, whiter army, backed by nuclear weapons and the Air Force. They use open racism to build a political following.

French revolution proves workers can run society



continued from pag.8

Here are some lessons, especially from the most radical and democratic period of 1789 to 1795.

The “sans-culottes” of the cities—workers, journeymen, apprentices, working women—always pushed the Revolution ahead, towards more equality, more rights and power for working people.

The “sans-culottes” had no political party. The party of petty-bourgeois revolutionaries and sincere idealists who worked most closely with them was called the Jacobins.

But the working class needs its own party. This is the greatest discovery of Vladimir Lenin, leader of the Bolshevik (communist) Revolution of 1917 in Russia. Today, it's the job of the Progressive Labor Party to fulfill that historic task.

It was the mass actions of the “sans-culottes”, sometimes supported by the most radical Jacobins, who pushed the Revolution to adopt the most democratic reforms.

The bourgeoisie, intellectuals, and “sans-culottes” all united to get rid of the king and aristocracy and to take land from the Church. But after that, their interests no longer coincided. The radical bourgeoisie needed the “sans-culottes” only as long as foreign armies threatened to destroy the Revolution.

Seizing the lands of aristocrats and the Church gave peasants their own land. They wanted higher prices for the food they grew. But the urban “sans-culottes” needed low prices. So, the peasants’ economic interests were more aligned with the bourgeois merchants, traders, and landlords than with those of the “sans-culottes”.

...The Paris Commune of 1871, and the Russian Revolution of 1917, were the first revolutions by the industrial working class, the proletariat. They all sprang from the lessons of the great French Revolution.

Once foreign armies were driven back, the bourgeois representatives—some of whom had been executed as counter-revolutionaries—turned against the Jacobins and the “sans-culottes” and established a more repressive state. After 1795 the propertied bourgeoisie was in firm control. They organized a bourgeois dictatorship, and then an authoritarian empire under Napoleon Bonaparte.

The communist movement begins

Gracchus Babeuf, a poor, self-taught worker, headed the last and most radical movement of the Revolution. His “Conspiracy for Equality” was crushed, and Babeuf executed. But one of his followers, Buonarroti, survived to influence the working-class and student militants of the 1840s, including Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels.

The working class of Europe learned from the experience of the “sans-culottes” of France. The Paris Commune of 1871, and the Russian Revolution of 1917, were the first revolutions by the industrial working class, the proletariat. They all sprang from the lessons of the great French Revolution.

Source: CHALLENGE, July 11, 2018. Suggested Reading: Suzanne Desan, *Living the French Revolution and the Age of Napoleon* (2013); Jacques Pauwels, *Le Paris des sans-culottes : guide du Paris révolutionnaire, 1789-1799* (Paris, 2021).



RED EYE ON THE NEWS ...

U.S.-Russia-Iran conflict brewing in Middle East

AP News, 7/14—The U.S. is beefing up its use of fighter jets around the strategic Strait of Hormuz to protect ships from Iranian seizures, a senior defense official said Friday, adding that the U.S. is increasingly concerned about the growing ties between Iran, Russia and Syria across the Middle East. Speaking to Pentagon reporters, the official said the U.S. will send F-16 fighter jets to the Gulf region this weekend to augment the A-10 attack aircraft that have been patrolling there...after Iran tried to seize two oil tankers near the strait last week, opening fire on one of them...the defense official told reporters the U.S. is considering a number of military options to address increasing Russian aggression in the skies over Syria, which complicated efforts to strike an Islamic State group leader last weekend. The official...said the U.S. will not cede any territory and will continue to fly in the western part of the country on anti-Islamic State missions.

China makes moves in Argentina

Al Jazeera, 7/17—Massa, who recently announced his bid for president in this year's election, met with a wide slate of government and business leaders, securing \$3.05bn from Chinese institutions to finance railways, power lines, lithium projects and renewable

energy in Argentina...But perhaps the announcement of most consequence came around the currency swap line between the two countries – a yuan lifeline...to the beleaguered Latin American economy, which is seeking more financial room to maneuver. There were a lot of thumbs-up signs from Argentine Economy Minister Sergio Massa on a recent trip to Beijing.

These growing ties have not gone unnoticed by the United States, the traditionally dominant player in the region, which has seen its influence on its so-called back-yard slip. In response, the US has sought to exert pressure on Argentina to rein in its ties with China, advocating privately, and in some cases publicly, against certain projects.

Racist kkkops in U.S. France

New York Times, 7/17—Years before France was inflamed with anger at the police killing of a teenager during a traffic stop, there was the notorious Théo Luhaka case. Mr. Luhaka...was ...in his housing project in a Paris suburb in 2017 when the police swept in to conduct identity checks. Mr. Luhaka was wrestled to the ground by three police officers, who hit him repeatedly and sprayed tear gas in his face. When it was over, he was bleeding from a four-inch tear in his rectum, caused by one of the officers' expandable batons.

Calls to overhaul the police go back at least four decades to when thousands of young people of color

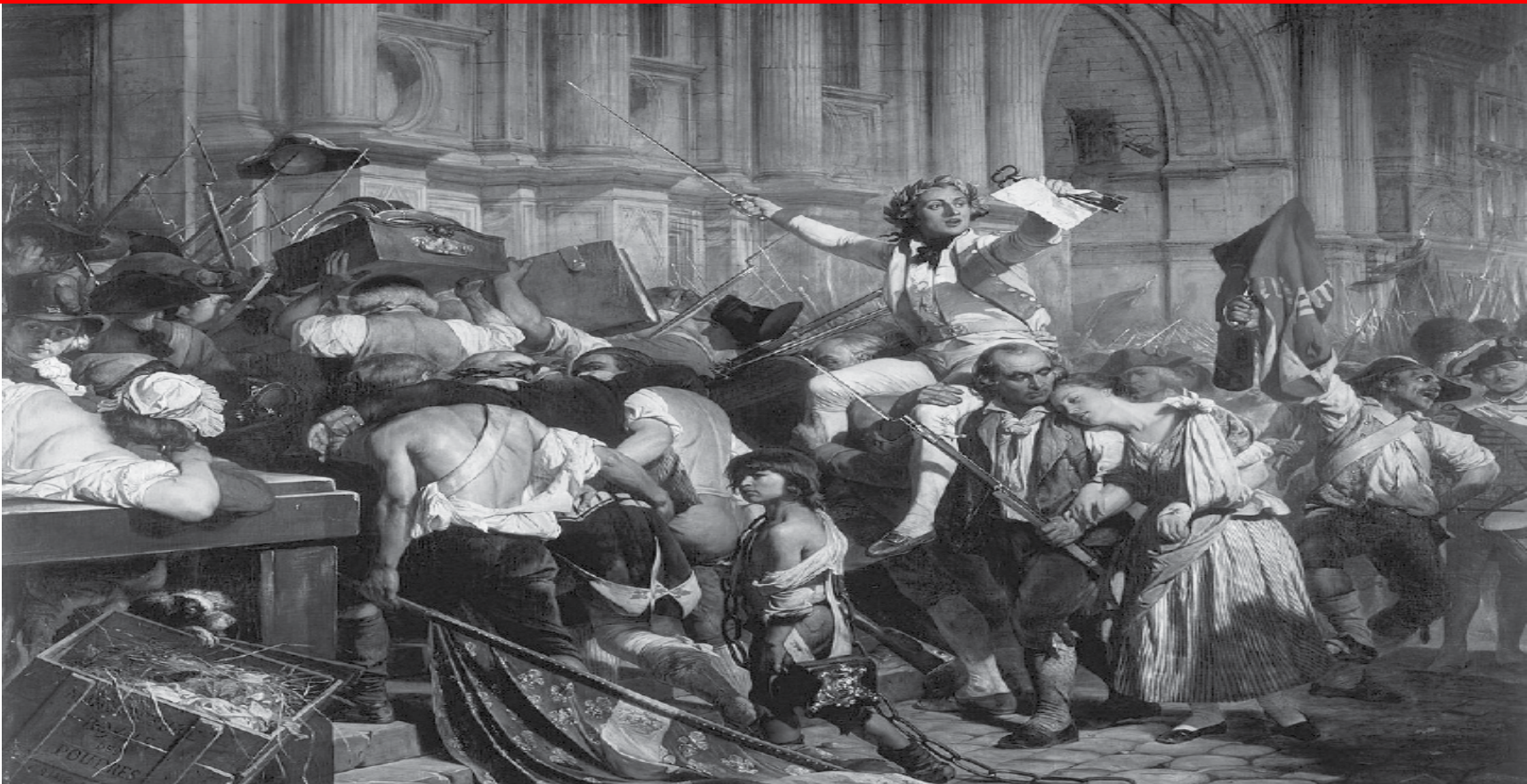
marched for months in 1983 from Marseille to Paris, over 400 miles, after an officer shot a young community leader of Algerian descent...Last month, after the police shooting of Mr. Merzouk, Alliance and another police union announced that they were at war with the rioters, whom they deemed “vermin” and “savage hordes.”

Israeli and Palestinian fascists fight on by killing Palestinian workers

The Guardian, 7/17—On the street in central Gaza City where the family of Khalil al-Bahtini lived, the contents of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad commander's home and the two houses on either side remain spilled out into the street...The GBU-39 bomb that crashed through three floors of the Bahtini home, down into the basement, also blew apart one side of the Adas's house, killing the family's two teenage daughters. Dania, 19, died immediately, while her sister, Imam, 17, clung to life for two hours before succumbing to her injuries in hospital...The assassinations, which came during a ceasefire, led Islamic Jihad to respond with almost 1,500 rockets fired towards Israel over the course of five days...The violence left 33 people in Gaza dead, including at least 10 women and children, and, according to Palestinian officials, 103 homes were destroyed and a further 2,800 damaged.

'STORM THE BASTILLE!'

WORKERS CAN, WORKERS WILL REVOLT!



Paul Delaroche painting (1830s) depicting the sans culottes returning victorious from storming the bastille on July 14, 1789.

On July 14, 1789, poor workers took over the Bastille, a medieval prison in the center of working-class Paris and a symbol of feudal, aristocratic power. The great French Revolution had begun! The capitalist class (bourgeoisie) would replace the monarchy (king and nobles).

But some advanced revolutionaries were advocating an egalitarian, communist society. This was the birth of the modern working-class communist movement!

Lessons from the storming of Bastille

France was then an agricultural society ruled by noble landowners and a powerful Catholic church, with the king at the top. The urban bourgeoisie wanted

a constitutional monarchy. That would give them more political power. They needed the urban workers, called “sans-culottes” – a French word meaning “worker’s pants” – to fight for them against the monarchy. But for a few years the “sans-culottes” fought for their own interests.

The sudden, violent overthrow of the French monarchy and landed aristocracy proved that the status quo was not “God-given,” not inevitable, not the product of “human nature.” It proved that the political structure could be changed for the better. A society with more equality and less exploitation was possible! The French Revolution also gave birth to future revolutionary communist movements.

The French Revolution was inspired by the Enlightenment, a bourgeois movement that attacked monarchies and feudalism. The Enlightenment popularized talk of human rights— liberal democracy, the so called rights of the people and equality for all. It argued that the power of kings and aristocrats was illegitimate.

In 1789 the French King had called a nationwide meeting (Estates-General) of nobles, clergy, and bourgeoisie, to vote for new taxes. When the bourgeoisie refused the King tried to shut them down. But the “sans-culottes” rebelled and stormed the Bastille. The revolution began.

Continued on page 7

WRITE FOR CHALLENGE!

CHALLENGE strives to be the communist paper for and by the international working class. We call on all readers, supporters, and comrades to submit class struggle articles, analytical pieces, original photos and graphics, letters, and political cartoons.

The next deadline is night of Friday, July 28

Send to desafio.challenge@gmail.com. For some guidance and house style rules, please go to www.bit.ly/338ZJow

All submissions are open to collective discussion, struggle, and change. See sidebar on page 2 about fighting for collectivity and against a cult of the individual.

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